

THE OUTLOOK



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They're about to leave
for the Southfield Civic
Center Recreation Room.

He's on his way.



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EDITORIAL

THE OUTLOOK is really making it. We have aroused critical comment from at least one member of CSM. Nothing could be more rewarding than to know that we are read and our words are stirring up thought--of whatever kind. Only a moribund effort would do less.

However, comments are of little avail if they are addressed only orally to the editors. We want to see your opinions in print in our pages. As editors and chief contributors (only because there has not, to date, been any outpouring of material from our members) to THE OUTLOOK we consider it to be part of our function to present our opinions. This is done, for the most part, in signed articles, in which case the position taken is not to be regarded as the official stance of CSM or of the editorial board as a whole.

THE OUTLOOK was brought into being for several reasons, one of which is "to promote greater commitment and involvement on the part of our members..." (January issue). Putting your thoughts into written form and sending them to us is one of the ways you can be committed and involved. Editing will be done if it is considered necessary, without changing the burden.

Like the man with the donkey in AESOP'S FABLES, who lost it off a bridge because he tried to do everything everyone told him to do, the worst thing we could do would

be to veer and waver with every oral criticism. If opinions are presented for publication, there will be the double advantage of letting us know how you feel and the matter will be brought to the attention of our readers as well. The editors want to be responsive to the feelings of members, especially if they are widespread. We are eager, as well, for the open discussion that gives evidence of an interested readership and a viable CSM.

IS THERE ESCAPE FOR THE DOOMED? MERCY FREEZING vs. HUMAN SUFFERING

A panel discussion of mercy freezing (live freezing of incurably and terminally ill persons) will be presented for CSM members and the general public on Thursday evening, May 21, at 8:00 P.M. in the Recreation Building of the Southfield Civic Center, Evergreen at 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ Mile Rd. \$1 donation will be asked.

Extra added attraction: The CSM van (mobile emergency unit) will be parked on a lot near the Recreation Building, and a guided tour will be offered before the panel discussion. (Plan to come a little early.) Many of our own members, as well as others, have never inspected this vehicle--the only one of its kind in the world. It is equipped with chemicals and devices for the early stages of freezing preparation, and there have been many improvements in recent months implemented by one of our Directors, Walter Runkel. It is a major Society investment.

Changing Conditions

Until now, cryonics has avoided the issue of mercy freezing because of the wide belief that it would be mercy killing. But new factors may indicate a change.

1. Advances in cryonics research. Dr. Isamu Suda's experiments with cat brains make it clear that

freezing before death does not necessarily result in death, even by present criteria.

2. The prevalence of transplants such as heart exchanges has established the willingness of medical men to make judgements and take risks in order to reverse apparently lethal physical conditions.

3. The present tendency to keep terminally and incurably ill persons alive artificially. Such patients are kept alive sometimes for months or even years, often in a comatose condition, while their families are drained financially, physically, and emotionally. The right of such people to protection from this suffering is significant.

The Panel

It is for these reasons that the panel has been structured to consider the moral, legal, medical, psychological and sociological aspects of mercy freezing.

At this writing (May 1), the panel members already committed are:

Reverend Lawrence Bobbitt of THE FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST) in Pontiac.

Judge Samuel J. Clarkson, presiding judge for 1970 in the 46th District for the State of Michigan. Judge Clarkson formerly was Mayor of Southfield for four terms. Prior to that he was a member of the House of Representatives in the state legislature.

Robert C. W. Ettinger, President of CSM.

Dr. Robert S. Drews, nationally known psychiatrist now in private practice, will act as moderator.

CSM members are urged to clear their calendars for this evening and participate in this important event.

It is possible that mercy freezing may prove crucial to the future of the cryonics movement.

NEWSWEEK DISCOVERS DEATH

The April 6 issue of NEWSWEEK included a long article on "How America Lives with Death". It is pretty good journalism, touching most of the bases--including cryonics--but NEWSWEEK, and America, have a long way to go toward understanding.

The piece is loaded with richly wry, though unintentional, humor. For example, one Dr. Robert Lifton, a Yale psychiatrist, is quoted as saying that "Death is the most important question of our time." (In earlier times, presumably, they had more important problems.) Arnold Toynbee is quoted as saying, "Death is un-American--an affront to every citizen's inalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." (The irony here is that Toynbee intends this as irony.) Straight-faced, the journalist quotes the incredible drivel of the hippies' idol, Alan Watts, who says, "The indefinite prolongation of the individual is bad design--architecturally, biologically, and psychologically."

Much of the article documents facts well known to cryonicists. Wayne State University's Prof. Robert Kastenbaum (a member of our Scientific Advisory Council) is quoted at length, partly on the extreme reluctance of Americans to talk or even think about death (accounting for part of our difficulty in recruiting members).

Another large segment concerns the systematic delusions that have been erected to evade the problem, e.g. finding "immortality" in one's children, or in the notion that one's "works" will endure or that one's culture, or nation,

or institution, or one's race, or some other empty abstraction will endure. The delusions, however, are not debunked in the article.

The writer acknowledges that some of us--a "Faustian element"--are preparing a "typically Western assault on death itself." Dr. Augustus Kinzel, president of the National Academy of Engineering, is quoted as saying, "We will lick the problem of aging completely." Alan Harrington's book, *THE IMMORTALIST*, is mentioned.

Myth and Religion. There is some fairly shrewd talk of psychology and myth. Behind the lines, however, we can read the interesting conclusion that some of the conventional religions are much closer to the spirit of cryonics than are the secular religions or ideologies, such as "humanism".

Christians and Moslems may not necessarily be right, but at least they are sane in that they will not settle for anything less than personal immortality. The communists, on the other hand, are hopelessly deluded in that they will sacrifice themselves in this life without any hope of reward in an afterlife, merely for the sake of "posterity".

Although the author overlooked it, the cryonicist spirit is also found in myths and ancient aspirations. In the Epic of Gilgamesh, the hero says, "I will break the door of Hell, and smash the bolts; I will bring up the dead to eat food with the living, and the living shall be outnumbered by the host of them." Strong words, Gil, but we're with you all the way.

TECHNOLOGY MISUNDERSTOOD?

To many observers today it appears there is a growing trend in this country to regard technology with

suspicion and even open hostility. In a paper this writer once prepared for a psychology course, progress (meant in a limited sense) was equated with technology. Fortunately, it wasn't the only grade I received as the instructor angrily circled the section and penciled in, "Is this progress?"

The more extreme hippies and yuppies and freakish variables of current subcultures in our society are examples of this type of thinking. Totally distressed by what they deem to be the dehumanization of a technological environment, they renounce what is termed a civilized life. They are able to survive with a minimum of effort. Some of them have set up communities in uninhabited areas and tend to resemble in their habits early American Indians. In an attempt at becoming noble savages they have turned their boat around, hoping to find happiness where they started and not somewhere down the river.

God and Technology

In talking with a Protestant minister several days ago about the cryonics program I was astonished at his simplistic views, which seem to echo those of the social dropouts.

He felt anyone would be foolish to have himself frozen. If God had wanted man to live longer He would have made him so. This reasoning seemed trite and easy to refute. I asked him if he used a car and if he had flown in airplanes. His affirmative answer provided what I thought was the basis for a flawless argument.

According to his premise, if God had wanted him to cross the city or nation he would have provided him with the bodily

equipment to get there without the necessity of using a totally manmade vehicle.

Unfortunately what had been thought to be flawless was in fact weak. The minister agreed with what I said. However, he felt that even though God permitted certain things to happen, use of them didn't make them right. He believes that if man had enough faith it wouldn't be necessary to build anything.

He further commented that he didn't feel badly about people dying prematurely. The only thing that counts is their souls--not their bodies at all. If people get to heaven, it just doesn't matter what happens to their bodies or how long they live. If God had wanted man to live longer, he would have made him capable of it.

Argument against this kind of belief is only slightly more fruitful than running your head against a brick wall. Obviously, when a person discredits all of technology and science and manmade goods as worthless or "pointless", there is no room for compromise and all possible arguments for cryonics have been dissipated. Fortunately, most people do not accept this theory that material and physical advances are of little or no consequence. Anyone would have a fight on his hands who tried to take the television away from a tired factory worker or the detergent away from a housewife who has been used to wearing clean clothes. Comfort and convenience have their supporters.

Technology a Scapegoat

Nevertheless many people regard technology as the cause of their woes. The young, who turn away from the society that has nurtured them are frustrated by seemingly insoluble problems.

The minister feels that people need more faith in God, and too much or even any emphasis on worldly matters detracts from this and therefore adds to man's misery.

The point is, of course, that there are many problems both psychological and physical that, although not brought about by technology, are not necessarily cured by it either. Technology is the most obvious thing in the world today. It's everywhere we go, in everything we see and part of everything we do. It has become the most convenient scapegoat to many. Partly perhaps because it has indeed caused many of the problems now plaguing the world.

The truth is, though, that unhappiness and misery persist in spite of technology, not because of it. Automobiles have brought pleasure and convenience. We should not blame the car for its attendant troubles, but rather the inability on our part to solve those problems, to install proper equipment for neutralizing the pollutants or to design a better engine.

Haphazard development and partial development of anything is bound to cause malfunctions and difficulties not foreseen. The real problem is ourselves. If we can withhold premature judgment and refrain from generalities and vague statements, we will be able eventually to use technology to our fullest advantage.

Ultimately the foundation of all argument for cryonics is the advance of science and technology. Without this we will all be dead as surely as our ancestors.

Patrick Dewey

BOOK REVIEW: VITAL PARTS

Vital Parts by Thomas Berger.
Richard V. Baron, Inc., 1969.

(The first non science-fiction novel to use cryonics as an integral part of its story.)

People are dying every day.
. . . Suppose. . . instead of being declared lifeless and lowered into the ground--from which there is no return--[he] is quick-frozen and stored until the day when science has arrived at a . . . cure. . . he is thawed out, his tissues still in serviceable condition except for those ravaged by disease. He is brought to life and treated with the new therapy. . . .

With these words heard on a late night TV talk show Rinehart, protagonist of VITAL PARTS, meets cryonics and is swept into a series of experiences only partly under his control.

The novel omits none of the elements deemed necessary for success in current literature. Sex, narcotics, black militancy--all are there. Only in its use of cryonics does this book differ from its contemporaries. From the time the subject is first presented the author presents the case for cryonics with strength and logic.

For instance, he writes:

All you have is your own life and if you lose it you have lost. The reverse is that as long as you have your life you are winning. That's the sole truth behind all the complicated lies, all the ethical systems, all that has been written or said or dreamed. When the vital spark leaves your body you turn into a lump of decaying

matter. There is no serious distinction between a corpse and a turd.

Berger understands that death renders even monumental achievement meaningless, while open-ended life offers the chance to outgrow every failure. As is said to the son of a dying prospective frozen patient:

"Your dad may live again. In a hundred, a thousand, years what do petty details matter? Napoleon, Caesar, Alexander the Great, they are all dust to stop a bunghole. . . . Shakespeare, too, was a transitory incident. . . . Truth may change and Time itself, Life as we know it. . . . Don't question, don't doubt. You cannot lose.

It is crazy and frightening and brave and majestic. Think what man can do without the fear of death. The mind as yet cannot cope with so glorious a concept. . . ."

It is in his consideration of cryonics that Rinehart is unique. He has been a real loser, but all his problems become unimportant when dwarfed by what is truly paramount. His experiences--all combine to make him grow from the put-upon nonentity to the decisive man: the man who will accept and finally actively seek being frozen himself.

Read VITAL PARTS. Its characters are well developed; it is absorbing reading; it is an important American novel.

TIDBITS

From Canada

The Gerontological Society has announced its 23rd annual scientific meeting for October 21-24 in Toronto, at the Royal York Hotel. Registration is \$12.00. Information can be obtained from the local chairman, Lawrence Crawford, Office on Aging, Department of Social and Family Services, Hepburn Block, Parliament Buildings, Toronto 182 Ontario, Canada.

From France

Anatole Dolinoff has been chosen the representative of the confederated European cryonics societies, and expects to visit the United States in the autumn of this year, probably in conjunction with a major conference to be sponsored by the Cryonics Society of New York. Mr. Dolinoff is president of the Société Cryonics de France.

New SCM Members

Those who have joined the Cryonics Society of Michigan recently include P.H. Doyle, Shirley E. Kopulos, Monroe Molner, Samuel Benson, Arlene K. Mingo, M. Sherwin, Harold Rossen and Dr. John Kammermeyer.

Welcome! We hope you will be with us for the duration--i.e., from now on.

Young Cryonics Speakers

Shelley Ettinger and Steve Ron, both students at Oak Park High School, were scheduled to address the Rotary Club of Berkeley on Monday, May 4.

The meeting was a luncheon, held at the First Methodist Church.

It was the first time Ron and Shelley have addressed business men. They recently made presentations to biology classes at the Shrine High School in Royal Oak.

California Convention

Last call for the Third National Convention to be held in Los Angeles at the Marina Hotel and Towers.

A number of CSM people are going. Join them for a pleasant and rewarding weekend, May 15-16.

New Mailing Policy

Members of CSM have been receiving two copies of THE OUT-LOOK and urged to pass them on to interested people and prospective members.

You are receiving two copies this month. But, beginning in June, this policy will be changed. You will receive only one copy, unless you notify the editors of a desire for a second copy.

This decision has been made in order that complimentary copies may be sent direct to the people whose names appear on the lists requested from members. (To date only three members have complied.)

A healthy organization--and a healthy paper need support. We do not want to stand still. We want to grow.

Send in your lists. Make a really determined effort to attend the panel discussion on Thursday, May 21. The only way we know you are behind us is if you show us. So come. Sell tickets. Bring guests. Make the evening a success.